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C O N F I D E N T I A L VILNIUS 001194

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/NB, EUR/ERA, EUR/SE

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [ECIN](#) [EU](#) [TU](#) [LH](#)

SUBJECT: LITHUANIA SUPPORTS TURKEY'S EU MEMBERSHIP

REF: SECSTATE 204758

Classified By: POL/ECON OFFICER CHRISTIAN YARNELL
FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

11. (C) We delivered reftel points regarding support for Turkey's EU membership and provided non-paper on Turkey's progress on Copenhagen criteria to the MFA's Jurgita Apanaviciute on September 27. Apanaviciute, who is responsible for enlargement issues within the MFA's European Union Department, said that Lithuania supports Turkey's aspirations to join the EU but remains firm that Turkey must meet the same standards and fulfill the same requirements (notably the Copenhagen political criteria) as the other states that recently joined the European Union. Recalling the September 11 visit to Lithuania of Turkish FM Abdullah Gul, she noted FM Antanas Valionis' public statement of Lithuania's support under those terms.

12. (C) Apanaviciute said she personally expected that the October 6 Commission report would not make a definitive recommendation on whether or when to begin accession negotiations with Turkey, in order to leave the Council free rein to decide the matter in December. Apanaviciute said that Lithuania would likely vote in December in favor of beginning accession negotiations, barring any negative development on Turkey's part.

13. (C) Charge raised the issue separately with three high-level Foreign Ministry officials: Ambassador Rokas Bernotas, MFA Multilateral Relations chief; Ambassador Arnoldas Milukas, MFA "Special Missions" Chief; and EU Department Director Zygimantas Pavilionis. All three reaffirmed the GOL's strong support for Turkish accession, and expressed cautious optimism that Turkey would be invited to begin the process soon. Pavilionis, who knows EU internal politics well after several years in Brussels, added that France was seeking to impede the process and that others like Denmark and the Netherlands also had serious reservations about Turkey.

14. (C) Charge also compared notes with Turkish Ambassador to Lithuania Kadriye Sanivar Kizildeli. She expressed confidence that the GOL would remain in the pro-accession camp. She said that Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul's swing through Lithuania earlier this month met Turkish objectives, since both President Adamkus and Foreign Minister Valionis expressed support for Turkey's eventual accession. She expressed apprehension about the refusal of the current frontrunner in the upcoming parliamentary election, Viktor Uspaskich, to meet with her to discuss the issue. At the same time, however, she doubted that the next government would significantly change current policy, and noted her confidence in the foreign policy professionals at MFA who manage the issue.

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